

In 1944 William Vogt, a conservation expert who spent three years on the guano islands of Peru studying the complete life-cycle of these birds, made an aerial survey of the islands lying off the coast between Arica and Valparaiso without finding any trace of nesting activities.

However, in March of 1946 our colleague Dr. Philippi, watching the comings and goings of Guanays and other birds with powerful field glasses from a vantage point on the coast of Cochagua province in Lat. 33° 58' S. came to the conclusion that there must be a nesting colony on the islet of Pupuya a couple of miles off the coast. This was confirmed in June of 1955 when our oceanographer friend from Peru, Enrique Avila, managed to land on this steep islet and found indications of a colony which he estimated at 80,000 birds. The nesting season was of course over at that date, but as he moved about among the rows of unmistakable nests, young birds of the year, some of them with patches of down still on the neck and head, scattered in all directions. It can be positively stated, therefore, that this cormorant does nest in Chile.

As already mentioned, the Guanay nests by the million on the islands off the Peruvian coast. This is true from Lobos de Tierra southwards and also to a lesser extent on some of the mainland promontories where special walled-in areas have been set aside by the Government to encourage the birds to establish auxiliary colonies.

Although some nests may be occupied at any time of year, the reproductive stream reaches its peak in November and December, when a density of three nests per square metre has been recorded from some of the islands.

Three or occasionally only two calcareous pale bluish eggs are laid, measuring on average $62.7 \pm 1.36 \times 40.3 \pm 0.75$ mm.; in shape and coloration they are indistinguishable from those of other cormorants.

The Eastern Least Honey-guide *Indicator meliphilus* (Oberholser) in Rhodesia

by MICHAEL P. STUART IRWIN

Received 12th November, 1965

The diminutive honey-guide *Indicator meliphilus* (Oberholser) has until now been recorded no further south than the Port Herald district of Malawi (Long 1961: 34). However, among a recent collection of birds from near the Haroni-Lusitu River junction in the Masetter District of Rhodesia at 20° 02' S., 33° 01' E., there are four specimens of the genus *Indicator*. Three of these represent the widespread *I. minor* Stephens, but the fourth proves to be an example of *I. meliphilus*. It was collected by A. F. Graham in the Haroni valley on 22nd August, 1965 at 1,300 ft. in low trees growing among scrub and grass near the edge of lowland evergreen forest. Thanks are due to Mr. A. H. Siemers, leader of the expedition of the Prince Edward School Natural History Society, of Salisbury, who made this collection of birds on behalf of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia.

It is a female, apparently adult, with wing 76.5, tail 48 and culmen 9 mm., thus falling within the size range as given by Chapin (1962: 43-44). In colour it agrees closely with the female discussed by Long from Malawi,

collected on the 16th May and said to have the skull not yet completely ossified, and with a male from Abercorn, Zambia, obtained on the 9th January, by being a rather bright golden green above on crown and mantle, with a faint greenish or yellowish wash on the underparts, though this is less noticeable in the male from Abercorn. Another male from this latter locality dated 2nd October, is however, somewhat duller, less golden green above and greyer on the under side. It more closely matches two western Zambian specimens from Kabompo Boma on 13th June and the Lisombo stream in the Mwinilunga District, on the 14th June, which are clearly separable. All the series are in fresh plumage.

Chapin *op. cit.* dismissed the race *I. m. angolensis* Monard, admitted by Friedmann (1958: 65–68), and accepted as valid by Traylor (1963: 108). The above-mentioned characters would seem to support some racial variation, though Friedmann extended the range of *I. m. angolensis* eastwards to Malawi and has written "*angolensis*" on the Malawi specimen discussed above. Larger series are obviously required before any final decisions can be reached. It may be mentioned that the duller and greyer birds, here considered as probably representing *angolensis*, are in coloration a far closer counterpart of *I. minor* than the more eastern examples of *meliphilus*.

This record constitutes a very considerable extension of the known range, extending its distribution, south of the Zambesi River, some 275 miles from Port Herald, Malawi, at the same time adding a new species to the South African Sub-region. A very brief description of the Haroni-Lusitu area is provided by Smithers (1956: 168) and the region is further discussed by Irwin (1963: 24–25). It possesses a number of unique features, with an admixture of montane and lowland avifaunal elements, to the latter of which this small honey-guide more probably belongs. It is undoubtedly more widespread than this solitary record might indicate and is certain to occur in adjacent Portuguese East Africa, from whence it undoubtedly ranges only very marginally within Rhodesian limits.

All the material mentioned in this discussion is in the collection of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo.

References:

- Chapin, J. P. 1962. Sibling species of small African Honey-guides. *Ibis*, 104: 40–44.
 Friedmann, H. 1958. The status of the Gray-breasted Least Honey-guide. *Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash.*, 71: 65–68.
 Irwin, M. P. S. 1963. Systematic and Distributional notes on Southern African birds. *Durb. Mus. Novit.*, 7(1): 17–26.
 Long, R. C. 1961. The birds of Port Herald District. Pt. II, *Ostrich*, 32: 23–35.
 Smithers, R. H. N. 1956. Some interesting Rhodesian records IV. *Ostrich*, 27: 168–170.
 Traylor, M. A. 1963. Check List of Angolan birds. *Publ. Cult. Comp. Cia. Diamant. Angola*, 61: 1–222.

The Spike-heeled Lark *Chersomanes albofasciata* in East Africa

by C. W. BENSON

Received 8th December, 1965

Mr. J. S. S. Beesley, of the Tropical Pesticides Research Institute, has asked me to study a specimen of the Spike-heeled Lark collected by him in northern Tanzania. It represents an extension of known range of over 1,200 miles, from central Angola, and the species is only otherwise known